



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good morning,

An Arizona blue spruce is going to Washington!

Harvested from the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest in eastern Arizona, a majestic 85-ft blue spruce has been selected to be the “People’s Tree” at the U.S. Capitol for the holiday season.

This is the first time in the 40 year history of the Capitol Christmas tree program that a tree has been selected from Arizona. We are of course thrilled that Arizona has this opportunity to be showcased in Washington D.C. for the holidays. This is sure to bring greater awareness to our state’s amazing and vibrant diversity.

The Capitol Christmas tree is touring Arizona before it heads to D.C. to be placed on the Capitol lawn. Thousands of residents have already come out to view this wonderful tree. If it travels to your community, don’t miss your chance to see it!

Have a great week.

AOT News

New Updates to AOT’s Research Web site!

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT’s business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- [Arizona Tourism Indicators 2nd Quarter 2009](#)
- [Gross Sales and Taxes August 2009](#)
- [Lodging Performance 3rd Quarter 2009](#)
- [Lodging Performance 3rd Quarter 2009 \(By County\)](#)
- [Passenger Volume August 2009](#)

- [State Park Visitation September 2009](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at melkins@azot.gov.

Two Arizona Tourism University Workshops Left - November 17 & 19!

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present Arizona Tourism University's complimentary workshop series *"Advocacy: A Necessary Skill in Challenging Times."*

These workshops will primarily focus on advocacy techniques such as how to develop messages, build coalitions and utilize human resources to engage in grass roots advocacy in support of your policy initiatives. The sessions will feature speaker Barry Aarons, lobbyist and owner of The Aarons Company LLC a Public Policy Consulting firm and Faculty Member of the Arlington, Virginia based Leadership Institute.

To register, please contact Meghan Dorn at 602-364-3708 or via email at mdorn@azot.gov.

"Advocacy: A Necessary Skill in Challenging Times" Workshops will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the following locations:

Casa Grande

Tuesday, November 17
Holiday Inn Casa Grande
777 N Pinal Ave
Casa Grande, AZ 85222

Rock Springs

Thursday, November 19
Rock Springs Café
35769 South Old Black Canyon Highway
Rock Springs, Arizona 85324

Upcoming Events & Activities

[National Tour Association Marketplace](#)

Date: November 14 – 18

Location: Reno, NV

[Kuoni Switzerland FAM Trip](#)

Date: November 17 – 21

Location: Grand Canyon, Sedona, Phoenix, Scottsdale

[International Media Golf Shootout](#)

Date: November 30 – December 6

Location: Greater Phoenix

AZAP FAM Tour

Date: December 1 – 6

Location: Phoenix, Chandler, Prescott, Scottsdale, Tucson, Page/Lake Powell, Lake Havasu City, Mesa, Tempe and Flagstaff

Industry News

Confidence in Tourism Sector Picking Up

The decline in international tourism may have started to bottom out, according to the latest edition of the UN World Tourism Organization's World Tourism Barometer. Worldwide, international tourist arrivals declined 7 percent between January and August 2009, but the rate of decline has eased in the past few months. These results, as well as the most recent economic data, confirm UNWTO's initial forecast of a 5 percent decline in international tourist arrivals for the full year 2009. For 2010, UNWTO expects moderate growth. Results for the first eight months of 2009 showed that international tourist arrivals declined in all world regions, except in Africa, which bucked the global trend. (*www.TravelAgentCentral.com, 11/6; Travel Advance, Nov. 9*)

PWC Downgrades 2010 Hotel Forecast Again

PricewaterhouseCoopers continued to move its U.S. lodging industry expectations downward, although the firm said industry performance indicates the initial stages of economic and lodging industry demand recovery. For 2009, PwC now expects revenue per available room to drop 16.4 percent and average daily rate to drop 8.8 percent compared with 2008 levels. These are slightly larger than the forecasted 16.1 percent and 8.7 percent respective decreases the firm issued in September. While both of these metrics will continue to move slightly downward in 2010, occupancy will begin to recover next year, according to PwC. After falling to 55.2 percent this year, PwC said full-year occupancy in 2010 would increase slightly to 55.8 percent. (*www.BTNOnline.com, 11/6; www.TravelPulse.com, 11/6; Travel Advance, Nov. 9*)

IPSOS Travel Barometer Finds Stability in Leisure Market

A new quarterly U.S. travel sentiment index constructed by research firm Ipsos will help clients identify trends in the attitudes and behaviors of the leisure and business traveler. The Ipsos Travel Barometer reported that in its baseline of early October, there appear to be signs that the U.S. leisure travel industry is stabilizing. The portion of those who say they will travel more for leisure in the next 12 months compared to the last 12 months is slightly higher (19 percent) than those who say they will travel less (15 percent), producing a net outlook momentum score of plus-4. Two thirds (66 percent) say their leisure travel activities will be the same in the next 12 months as it was in the last 12 months. With the holiday season approaching, "visiting friends or relatives" and grabbing "weekend getaways" are among the most likely trip to be taken first by U.S. travelers in the next six months. (*www.TravelPulse.com, 11/6; Travel Advance, Nov. 9*)

Is "worst over" for tourism/travel?

The decline in international tourism has started to bottom out and lodging demand should start to recover next year, according to two new and separate studies. International tourist arrivals

declined by seven percent between January and August of this year, but the rate of decline has eased in the past few months, says the UNWTO World Business Barometer. The group expects "moderate" growth next year.

In the latest survey, the percentage of experts with a negative outlook for the next four months has decreased from 62 percent to 42 percent while for 30% of experts, prospects are 'equal', and for 28 percent they are 'better' or 'much better'. "Throughout this year, the world's tourism industry was faced with a large number of challenges, led by the global economic crisis, the credit crunch and rising unemployment, not to mention the influenza pandemic. Seldom in recorded tourism history has the industry had to contend with so many different issues at the same time," said UNWTO Secretary-General a.i. Taleb Rifai.

He added: "However, the negative trend that emerged during the second half of 2008 and intensified in 2009 is starting to show signs of receding."

PricewaterhouseCoopers said of the lodging industry's expected improved performance: "Hotel occupancy rates will increase in 2010. However, 2010 ADR levels are expected to remain below 2009 room rate levels."

In 2010, PricewaterhouseCoopers forecasts that a supply growth of 1.4 percent, combined with growing demand, will result in a subtle recovery of hotel occupancy to 55.8 percent, which is seven percentage points below the long-term average of 62.8 percent. "Barring any unforeseen circumstances from an operating perspective, the worst appears to be over," said Scott D. Berman, principal and U.S. Industry Leader, Hospitality & Leisure, for PricewaterhouseCoopers. (*TravelMole e-Newsletter*, Nov. 10)

U.S. Looks to Repair Airline Industry

The Obama administration is taking its first step toward trying to fix the ailing airline industry, mired in a severe economic slump and facing safety worries. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood is holding a forum today to discuss the state of the industry and ways government can help provide economic stability for air carriers. The industry has been rocked by repeated crises in years, including the 9/11 terror attacks, the SARS virus, and the current economic downturn. The forum, which is closed to the public and the news media, was organized at the request of the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department. However, airlines are extremely wary of any discussion of a return to economic regulation. They contend they are already heavily regulated and taxed. (*AP*; *www.Boston.com/Business*; *Page 1B, USA Today*; *Travel Advance*, Nov. 12)

Fort McDowell to Celebrate 28th Anniversary of Dam Defeat

On November 20 – 22 the 28th Annual Orme Dam Victory Days will celebrate the social and economic gains made by Fort McDowell in the past 28 years since Interior Secretary James Lee Watt announced the decision to not build the dam. Some of Arizona's most beautiful and pristine desert lands would be drowned beneath a sluggish, muddy reservoir had not the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation fought a historic battle for its home.

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation will host a variety of events. Come enjoy the experience and excitement of the Orme Dam Victory Days with a Pow Wow, the All-Indian Rodeo, and cultural dances at the Yavapai Indian Village! Kids can have a blast at the carnival, while their parents can shop at the arts & crafts show at the rodeo fairgrounds. BMX racing, sports competitions

and many other fun events are available. Come join the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in celebrating the dam that never was! For information on this and other Orme Dam Victory Days events, visit www.ftmcdowell.org or call 480-789-7162.

New Grand Canyon Visitor Center Parking Expected to Open in Time for Thanksgiving

Construction on Phase I of the improvements called for in Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan (Transportation Plan) is nearing completion; and the new parking areas at Grand Canyon Visitor Center (Visitor Center) are expected to open in time for Thanksgiving.

In late April 2009, construction began on Phase I of the improvements outlined in the Transportation Plan. The Phase I improvements primarily address concerns with traffic congestion and significant parking shortages in and around Mather Point and the Visitor Center. These improvements include:

- realignment of the South Entrance Road to loop around the Visitor Center area to the south and west;
- three new visitor parking lots which will provide parking for up to 600 vehicles, including RVs; and
- a new parking lot which will provide parking for 40 commercial tour vehicles.

For additional information, contact Vicky Stinson, Project Manager at 928-774-3026 or Shannan Marcak, Public Affairs Specialist at 928-638-7958.

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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